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Off alle þing þat men may se,
Moost o lowe forsoþe þey be.

To be sure, one cannot sum up in more felicitous terms the contents of the *French* lays.²¹ But it is obvious that we are getting rather far from the Bretons; nobody at the time of Marie would have dreamed of ascribing to them songs of 'bourdys' and 'rybaudry'; surely the poetess would have denied the charge most indignantly. We must wait many years before we can find in the authors of *Ignauze*, *Lecheor* and *Nabaret* men ready to agree on this point with our ingenious *trouvère*. Of course, by thus going for his examples of Breton lays to collections of French tales, he ran the risk of mixing up quite different things; he was almost inevitably led to assign to the latter a name which by right belonged only to the former:

- 3 *þe layes þat ben of harpyng*
Ben yfounde of frely thing.
Sum ben of wele and sum of wo . . .
9 *Sum of bourdys and sum of rybaudry.*

It must be said at once, that this confusion is not peculiar to our author; it was made in his own time by more than one lay-writer. As a matter of fact, it can be traced back to Marie herself. While in the oldest of her tales, *Guigemar*, and in some others, she kept carefully apart the two notions of 'tale' written for readers and 'lai' sung to a tune, there is no doubt but that in several others she inclined to call her own tale a *lai* as well as the real or pretended original Breton song. Contradictions and hesitations such as these rather puzzled her imitators in the following age. Some consistently maintained the distinction between 'tale' and 'lay' to the end; others, more or less consciously or willingly, failed to perceive or keep up that distinction, and thereby contributed to assign to the word 'lai,' the only sense of which, up to Marie's time, had been song, a new meaning, that of short narrative poem on a subject connected with the 'matière de Bretagne.'²² The lost *lai d'Orphée*, we may now

²¹ It is, therefore, quite fitting that W. Hertz should have opened his collection of lays in his *Spielmanns Buch* by a rendering of *Sir Orfeo*. But whether our prologue was actually meant by its author to be the introduction to a large collection of lays, as Mr. Brugger suggests in *Zts. f. fr. Spr. u. Litt.*, xx, 154, n. 103, is doubtful.

²² On this point, see *Zts. f. rom. Phil.*, xxix, 299 ff.

conclude, had certainly its share in that most curious development, and in any study of the evolution of the lai (the word and the thing) must be mentioned and discussed by the side of *Doon*, *Lecheor* and *Tyolet*. English literature, too, as we know, welcomed, for a time, that novel use of an old word, and it is not absurd to suppose that the English translation of *Orphée*, our *Sir Orfeo*, had a good deal to do with that departure from tradition.

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SHAKESPEARE, *Tempest* 2. 2. 28.

Malone, on *R. and J.* 1. 1. 37, defined 'Poor John' as 'hake, dried, and salted,' and is followed by all the editions and dictionaries that I have examined. The definition is inaccurate in two respects: 'Poor John' was not hake, and it was not salted. The proof is furnished by Captain John Smith, especially in his *Description of New England*. In the edition of 1624 (Arber, *English Scholar's Library* 16. 709) he says: 'How many thousands this fiftie or sixty yeeres [1564-1614 or 1624] haue beene maintained by *New found land*, where they take nothing but small Cod, whereof the greatest they make Cor-fish, and the rest is hard dried, which we call Poore-Iohn, would amaze a man with wonder.'

To this corresponds, in the edition of 1616 (Arber, p. 195): '*New found Land*, doth yearly fraught neere 800 sayle of Ships with a sillie leane skinny Poore-Iohn, and Corfish; which at least yearly amounts to 3 or 400000 pound.'

That it was dried, and not salted, is shown by various considerations. (1) It is said to be 'hard dried' (see above). (2) In a list of fish (Arber, pp. 239, 255, 745) we have: 'Herring, Salt-fish, poore Iohn,' etc.; and (pp. 238, 254, 743): 'Salt-fish, poore Iohn, Salmons,' etc. (3) Smith says (p. 198; cf. p. 713): 'In the end of August, September, October, and Nouember, you haue Cod againe, to make Cor fish, or Poore Iohn: and each hundred [fish] is as good as two or three hundred in the *Newfound Land*: so that halfe the labour in hooking, splitting, and turning

is saued'; he says nothing about salting. To the same effect (p. 199; cf. p. 713): 'Now, young boyes and girles, Saluages or any other, be they neuer such idlers, may turne, carry, and return fish.' And again (p. 199; cf. p. 714): 'One third part of that companie are onely but proper to serue a stage, carry a barrow, and turne Poor Iohn.'

Poor John seems to have been much used at sea as food for the sailors. Thus in the *Observations of Captain Richard Whitbourne* relative to sending out ships to Newfoundland (Arber, pp. 777 ff.), we find '2000 of poore Iohn to spend [i. e., in eating] in going,' at a cost of £6 10s., out of a total expense of £420 11s. In Smith's *Accidence for Young Sea-men* (Arber, p. 804), after advising the commander to see that he has a competent proportion of delicacies for his own use, and the entertainment of strangers, but also for the occasional needs of his men, he adds: 'I say the want of those necessaries, occasions the losse of more men, then in any English fleet hath bin slaine in any fight since [15]88: for when a man is ill sicke, or at the poynt of death, I would know whether a dish of buttered Rice, with a little Cinnamon and Sugar, a little minced meate, or roast beefe, a few stewed Prunes, a race of greene-ginger, a flap Lacke, a can of fresh water brued with a little Cinnamon, Ginger, and Sugar, be not better than a little poore *Iohn*, or salt fish, with oyle and mustard,' etc.

As early as 1585, however, there is evidence that Poor John was welcomed by English sailors, especially when captured from an enemy. Cates, *A Summarie and True Discourse of Sir Francis Drake's West Indian Voyage*, A. D. 1585 (Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, Glasgow, 1904, 10. 99, 100) affords this illustration: 'We happened to meet with some other French ships, full laden with Newland fish, being upon their returne homeward from the said Newfoundland: whom the Generall after some speech had with them (and seeing plainly that they were Frenchmen) dismissed, without once suffering any man to go aboard of them. The day following . . . we discried another tall ship of twelve score tunnes or thereabouts; . . . and the Tygar having caused the said strange ship to strike her sailes, kept her there without suffering anybody to go aboard

untill the Admirall was come up: who forthwith sending for the Master, and divers others of their principall men, and causing them to be severally examined, found the ship and goods to be belonging to the inhabitants of S. Sebastian in Spaine, but the mariners to bee for the most part belonging to S. John de Luz, and the Passage. In this ship was great store of dry Newland fish, commonly called with us Poore John, whereof afterwards (being thus found a lawfull prize) there was distribution made into all the ships of the fleet, the same being so new and good, as it did very greatly bestead us in the whole course of our voyage.' This quotation may also serve to illustrate Smith's statement (Arber, p. 711: 'And whereas it is said . . . *New found land* [serves] the most part of the chiefe Southerne Ports in *Europe*, with a thin Poore-Iohn,' etc.; where p. 197 has: '[serves] all Europe with,' etc.

Other occurrences of the term 'Poor John' are: Beaumont and Fletcher, *Scornful Lady* 2. 3; Massinger, *Renegado* 1. 1; Shirley, *Maid's Revenge* 3. 2.

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AN ENGLISH PARALLEL TO KLOPSTOCK'S *Hermannsschlacht*.

Ten years before Klopstock published his *Hermannsschlacht*, there appeared in London a drama by William Mason, entitled *Caractacus*. Written on the Model of the Ancient Greek Tragedy, (1759). The drama represents an episode in the long conflict between the Celtic Britons and the Romans and is largely based upon Tacitus' account in the *Annals* (xii, 33 ff.). The old King Caractacus after fighting the Romans for ten years seeks refuge with the Druids on the island of Mona. The Roman general Aulus Didius attacks the island. He is repulsed, at first, but the treachery of a young Briton enables him to send an army through the pass leading to the abode of the Druids. After a brave struggle the Britons are vanquished; Caractacus, his daughter Evelina and her lover Elidurus are captured; Arviragus, the son of Caractacus, succumbs to his wounds.